



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

SANITATION AND SOCIOLOGY.

Non est vivere, sed valere vita.—*Martial*.

AN eminent sanitarian has said that "the relations between sociology and hygiene are extremely intimate,—a fact which seems not sufficiently appreciated by the students of either subject." It is true that one need not search far for instances of the failure of people in general to recognize the close relationship which exists between sanitary conditions and social progress; but ignorance or indifference on the part of the general public may be pardoned, surely, because so little has been done in the past to diffuse general information concerning the facts and theories, or the actual and ideal achievements, of either sanitation or sociology. Such an attitude of mind, however, on the part of the expert in either subject is becoming almost worthy of censure, for sufficient progress has been made along both lines of investigation to show certain phases of their interdependence. The more study is given to these problems of life, the more helpful the student finds the possibilities involved in this relationship and the more impatient he becomes of the investigator in either department whose efforts to secure independence in his chosen field lead him to a false valuation of the good which may result from a recognition of the bond which truly exists and which is capable of reacting as helpfully for the one side as for the other.

Little time need be spent in searching for evidence that the sanitarian allows himself a very narrow outlook. In general, he limits his object to the prolongation of existence. The address delivered by Dr. Bowditch of Massachusetts at the first meeting of the first State Board of Health organized in the United States is recognized on all sides as epoch-making; nevertheless it contained so limited a conception of the aim of sanitary reform as is implied in the following statement: "I beg

you to bear in mind that all these investigations have been made by the state (England) with one sole object in view, viz., the improvement in human health, and for the lengthening out of human life of each individual man or women; certainly no object can be nobler, none more deserving the attention of learned men or of philanthropists or statesmen."

In corroboration of the view that this is frequently the governing principle in public health studies, it is found that treatises on sanitation and hygiene present an array of statistics concerning the rate of mortality, with theories as to the commercial value of the higher rate of prolonged existence. For example, it is shown that England has expended within a few years for public health six hundred million dollars. The rate of mortality was 22 per 1000 in 1875, 20 in 1880, and 17 in 1889. The number of lives saved increased in 1880 to 55,000 and in 1889 to 142,000 and for the period 1880-9 to the enormous total of 858,591. According to the statistician Farr "these lives represent a capital of six hundred million dollars, so that in ten years the nation would have more than recovered the sum it expended, while in the calculation no account is taken of disease averted and there can be no figures for that which cannot be calculated, such as suffering prevented, health improved and life made happier." Dr. W. E. Boardman showed in the sixth report of the Massachusetts Board of Health that the annual loss to the commonwealth by preventable sickness is considerably over three million dollars, or in other words "in order to affect a reduction in the annual mortality at the rate of only four per thousand, the state might expend a capital of over fifty-three millions of dollars in sanitary improvements and the sum invested in this manner would continue to return interest at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum."

Again, a noted sanitarian has called attention to the fact that but little more than one third of the value of the natural length of life is realized even in civilized countries and he states that the function of the sanitarian is to "prevent unnecessary disease and thereby unnecessary mortality."

Unquestionably the results as shown by the mortality records serve very important ends, as has been suggested, both in proving the practicability of preventing disease and in justifying and encouraging still further expenditures, labors and studies. And the question might reasonably be asked whether any worker in the interests of humanity might not well be content with such immediate and definite results and not seek a more remote and uncertain end. Is it not probable that he will eventually effect more for the welfare of mankind by keeping a concrete purpose, which time is proving to be feasible, definitely before him, rather than by groping blindly for other results, which may after all prove mere will-o'-the-wisps? Happily sanitarians are beginning to say "no" in most emphatic terms. The prolongation of existence is not in itself an adequate aim for human endeavor. It is impossible to stifle the conviction that sanitary experts have the right to recognize openly the higher purpose which, consciously or otherwise, is constantly influencing their efforts. The extension of the duration of physical life is not a sufficient motive for those who, while using their knowledge and strength to improve the material conditions of life, are not satisfied with the notion of man as an animal, but are fired in their purpose with the conception of which Hamlet's words are the expression—"What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!"

The duty of the sanitarian is therefore acknowledged to be of greater scope as the years pass and the meaning of sanitary reform is proved not to be restricted to the physical life of man, but to affect all his activities as a human being. The interest of the sanitarian is now said to be in "whatever can cause or help to cause discomfort, pain, sickness, death, vice or crime,—and whatever has a tendency to avert, destroy, or diminish such causes." We are told that preventable evils, such as loss of life, impairment of health, and physical disability, impose upon the people unnumbered and immeasurable calamities, pecuni-

ary, social, physical, mental and moral, which ought to be avoided.

It may be claimed that such a conception has always been somewhat recognized by the sanitarian. For instance, E. A. Parkes in the introduction to his work on *Practical Hygiene* says "Taking the word hygiene in the largest sense, it signifies rules for perfect culture of mind and body. It is impossible to dissociate the two. The body is affected by every mental and moral action; the mind is profoundly influenced by bodily conditions. For a perfect system of hygiene we must train the body, the intellect and the moral faculties in a perfect and balanced order. Looking only to the part of hygiene which concerns the physician, a perfect system of rules of health would consider the human being (1) in relation to the natural conditions which surround him, (2) in his social and corporate relations, (3) in his capacity as an independent being, having within himself sources of action in thoughts, feelings, desires, personal habits, all of which affect health and which require self-regulation and control." But such broad, general statements do not entirely satisfy. It is with a feeling of relief that we find that in the address of Dr. Bowditch already quoted the third object of the Massachusetts Board of Health was stated to be "to investigate the effects of the use of intoxicating liquors upon the industry, prosperity, happiness, health and lives of the people."

The sanitarian, then, who rests content with figures which show that his work results in a diminished rate of mortality and disease, utterly fails to grasp the real significance of his task and is, in so far, unfitted to accomplish it. While holding fast to the idea of the value of physical life, he should recognize the fact that there are other and higher ends which it is his duty to subserve. In the words of Sir John Simon, "When sanitary reformers appeal to the conscience of modern civilization against the merely quantitative waste of human life, their deeper protest is against the heedless extinction of those high and beautiful possibilities of being, against the wanton interception of such powers for good, against the cruel smothering of such capacities

for happiness Our science, which is becoming more and more able to preserve and strengthen to men their gift of life, would indeed offer but a joyless task to its administrators, if they had not the hope that the lives they endeavor to maintain would be lives of growing worth and happiness." The sanitarian is right in regarding his special field of work in relation to the higher activities of mankind. He should require that, in his own mind at least, every principle studied, every reform advocated, every plea made, should be considered in the light of its rôle as a part of the foundation for the highest and best expression of life, whether it be physical, intellectual, moral or spiritual. The sound body is of little use save as it can help in the manifestation of sound mental and spiritual activities. The house which is sanitarily perfect has a small function in the economy of life unless it contributes to the upbuilding of men with perfect minds and souls. And even though figures may fail for the proof, the sanitarian is justified in consciously striving after and demanding such results. As Emerson says—"A house should bear witness in all its economy that human culture is the end to which it is built and garnished. It is not for festivity. It is not for sleep. But the pine and the oak shall gladly descend from the mountains to uphold the roof of men as faithful and necessary as themselves, to be the shelter always open to the good and the true,—a hall which shines with sincerity, brows ever tranquil, and a demeanor impossible to disconcert."

If general assent is given to the proposition that the sanitarian has a part to play in promoting all the highest and best activities of mankind, the converse equally must be true that, if the sociologist is to study the facts of associated human activities with a view to social amelioration, he is but a partial and, in so far, a worthless observer, if he ignores the data which the sanitarian can furnish. The social reformer who overlooks or minimizes the influence of unsanitary physical conditions on the development of man robs himself of a weapon of great power. A careful and logical thinker would hardly believe that this could be done and yet there is ample evidence that frequently

very inadequate recognition is given to the real relation between social and sanitary conditions. An instance may be cited from a well-known work on the causes and remedy of crime, in which it is stated that the only simple and absolutely final division of the active causes of crime is into the two main heads heredity and environment, and yet, in a detailed study of the latter head, sanitary conditions are not even specified or discussed.

Cases are not lacking to prove that some phases of mediæval theology are not extinct in the present age, even among persons who pride themselves upon their advanced and progressive views on social themes. A few years ago a ward committee of the associated charities organization in a large city made a careful sanitary inspection and survey of a portion of the district under their charge which presented problems of unusual difficulty. An interested observer commended the work in speaking to a member of the committee, saying that it was only by the study and knowledge of fundamental facts and principles that any permanent good could be accomplished and among these the physical environment must certainly be counted. The reply was made that "after all, the sanitary conditions did not mean much—if the people were born to be bad they would be bad in spite of their physical surroundings." Such a view of the predestination of man upon earth is by no means uncommon and yet, if it were true, all endeavor in every realm of body, mind or morals would be practically fruitless.

But even when the connection between physical conditions and mental and moral manifestations is recognized, there is a tendency to make it abstract, to bury it in obscure terms, to relegate it to the battlefield of biological strife. Heredity, the transmission of acquired traits, the variation of species, and similar phrases are used to conjure with, until the seeker for an opportunity to increase the sum of human welfare begins to think that the only chance for usefulness lay in prehistoric ages rather than in the living present and with primeval man rather than with his suffering brother and neighbor.

A more rational and practical view, however, is gaining

ground. It was indicated as long ago as 1840, when Edwin Chadwick in his report on the sanitary condition of the laboring classes of Great Britain came to the following conclusions:

That the younger population, bred up under noxious physical agencies, is inferior in physical organization and general health to population preserved from the presence of such agencies.

That the population so exposed is less susceptible to moral influences and that the effects of education are more transient than in a healthy population.

That these adverse circumstances tend to produce an adult population short-lived, improvident, reckless and intemperate and with habitual avidity for sensual gratifications.

That these habits lead to the abandonment of all the conveniences and decencies of life, and especially lead to the overcrowding of their homes, which is destructive to the morality as well as the health of large classes of both sexes.

That the removal of noxious physical circumstances and the promotion of civic, household and personal cleanliness is necessary to the improvement of the moral condition of the population, since sound morality and refinement in manners and health are not long found coexistent with filthy habits amongst any class of the community.

This relationship between physical and social conditions is shown in another form by the following statements in Giddings' *The Theory of Sociology*: "Social aggregates are formed at first by external conditions, such as food supply, temperature, etc." "That the resources and other circumstances of the physical environment must be regarded as the true cause of social aggregation is plainly shown." "Society like the individual must adjust itself to a physical environment." "What is the fact of progress? In what does it consist? The answer of sociology will be that progress includes an increase of material well-being, etc."

This, then, is the relationship between sanitation and sociology: The individual is the essential element of society, his social value depends largely upon his health, while in turn his

health is partly determined by the conditions which society imposes. This conclusion leads to another which is of cheer to those who may perchance be discouraged and falter by the way. The disheartening status of mankind today is undoubtedly the result of the sanitary and social conditions of past ages and former generations, but the influences under which men of the present generation place themselves are more or less within their control and may be made to work for both present and future good. As knowledge and purpose unite for this end, the truth of the idea will grow that the degeneracy or perfection of future generations depends on the acts of men of today. Sanitation then will show what steps should be taken by society, individually and collectively, to secure the health of the race. Clean air, sunlight, wide streets, good pavements, public parks, nourishing food, sanitary schools, public baths, adequate housing, are sanitary measures which are most effective in both sanitary and social results if carried out at times when there seems no special cause for anxiety. The social reformer for his part will guide men to make some sacrifice of present comfort or enjoyment, to undertake labor and expense, so that all the forces of society may be united in bringing mankind as speedily as possible to the complete realization of its mighty and noble capabilities. Sanitation and sociology must go hand in hand in their effort to improve the race. The value of the relation which exists between them will be great in proportion as its importance is consciously and openly recognized.

MARION TALBOT.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.